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# ALLEGORICAL REPRESENTATION OF THE SYNAGOGUE IN A TWELFTH CENTURY ILLUMINATED MS. OF HILDEGARD OF BINGEN

BY CHARLES SINGER, Oxford.

THE general subject of the representation of the Synagogue in mediaeval art has been well reviewed by Hildenfinger,<sup>1</sup> and by Cahier and Martin.<sup>2</sup> In the following pages we propose only to discuss certain miniatures and the accompanying text of a particular manuscript which has not been previously explored from this standpoint. We may begin our review by placing the reader in possession of a few facts concerning the authoress of the work.

Hildegard was born at Böckelheim in 1099, and died at Rupertsberg, opposite Bingen, in 1180. At the age of eight she was placed in the hands of Jutta, a female recluse who had taken up her dwelling on the Mount of St. Disibode, a few miles from Bingen and on the banks of the Nahe. Jutta gradually collected around her a number of other pious women, and thus formed a nunnery under the Benedictine rule. On the death of Jutta in 1136, Hildegard took the office of prioress, but in 1147 she and some of her nuns migrated down the Nahe to Rupertsberg, where a second convent was established.

Hildegard was a woman of extraordinarily strong and

<sup>1</sup> P. Hildenfinger, 'La Figure de la Synagogue dans l'art du moyen âge,' *Revue des Études Juives*, XLVII, 187.

<sup>2</sup> C. Cahier and A. Martin in *Mélanges d'Archéologie, d'Histoire et de Littérature . . . sur . . . moyen âge*, vol. II, Paris, 1851, pp. 50-9, and also *Monographie de la Cathédrale de Bourges*, Paris, 1841-44.

original character. The freedom and the terms with which she denounced the great ones of the earth, even the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa himself, as well as the character of some of her visions, and much of the setting of her life, recall the Hebrew prophets. Typical is her last public act. Having allowed burial in her own convent cemetery to a youth whose stormy life had ended in what she regarded as reconciliation with the Church, Hildegard defied Pope and Bishops, and incurred for many months the ban of the Church rather than allow the desecration of the grave, or admit either the youth's death in sin or her own error.

Hildegard is distinguished in the field of science by common sense, and a respect for what in modern parlance we should term 'hygiene'. Her *Physica* comprises a collection of the scanty scientific knowledge of the twelfth century, and is of special medical interest as containing a description of the nature and uses of herbs. The *Liber Simplicis Hominis* contains scattered throughout its chapters valuable glimpses of physiological conceptions prevalent in Germany at the period. Another work, the *De Causis et Curis Morborum*, to which her name is attached, appears to us to be spurious, and probably collected early in the thirteenth century. In the domain of art she also claims a place, especially by her church music and by her mystery play. But the chief interest in Hildegard will always centre round her visions, mainly embodied in two long works, the *Liber Divinorum Operum Simplicis Hominis*, and above all in the *Scivias*, a name interpreted by her as *Scite vias Domini*.

The faith and creed of Hildegard were naturally those of a pious churchwoman of her age. But the especial and personal character of her religion was expressed in her

visions. The general background of these visions is clearly borrowed from Isaiah, Ezekiel, and the Apocalypse, and indeed with that latter work they have much in common both in form and feeling. Hildegard's writings contain many beautiful and moving passages, and it is unfortunate for the purpose of this essay that the literary value of those sections with which we are here concerned is comparatively small.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE WIESBADEN MS.

Manuscripts of Hildegard's various works are numerous, but the most interesting is perhaps the magnificently illuminated Parchment of the Scivias, which now reposes in the Nassauische Landesbibliothek at Wiesbaden. This beautiful volume of 235 folios contains numerous miniatures of the highest interest for the history of twelfth-century art. These have been recently studied by the late Dom Louis Baillet,<sup>4</sup> of the Benedictine monastery of Osterhooft, and to his courtesy and learning the present writer owes a debt of gratitude. Baillet, after prolonged study, came to the conclusion that the manuscript was written in or near Bingen in the twelfth century, and probably towards the end of that period. Its miniatures help the reader greatly in the interpretation of the visions, and illustrate

<sup>3</sup> A large and tedious literature has arisen around Hildegard and her works. The best recent lives of her are by Joseph May, München, 1911, and J. P. Schmelzeis, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1879. No critical edition of her writings has appeared. Many of her works, edited however mainly from inferior MSS., are to be found in vol. 197 of J. P. Migne's *Patrologia Latina*. A selection of her miscellaneous writings has been well edited by Cardinal J. B. Pitra in his *Analecta Hildegardis Opera*, Rome, 1882. A Bibliography, fairly complete up to its date, has been provided by A. von der Linde in his *Katalog der Wiesbadener Handschriften*, Wiesbaden, 1877.

<sup>4</sup> Louis Baillet, 'Les Miniatures du Scivias de Sainte Hildegarde', in the *Monuments et Mémoires publiés par l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, tome XIX, Paris, 1912.

them often in the minutest and most unexpected details. In view of this and of the extreme difficulty of understanding many of the visions without these illustrations, the present writer has little doubt that this particular manuscript was supervised by Hildegard herself. As she originally set down the *Scivias* in 1141, there would have been plenty of time for the preparation of this remarkable manuscript before her death in 1180. There are illuminations accompanying all the visions, and at least three of them bear on our subject.

Hildegard herself could not fail to have been well acquainted with the Jews. Benjamin of Tudela, who visited Bingen between the years 1160 and 1173, and therefore during Hildegard's residence there, tells us that a congregation existed in the town at that time. Benjamin's visit, indeed, may well have taken place while our manuscript was actually in preparation. The Vision of the Synagogue is thus presumably in some degree a polemic against the local Jewish community.

#### THE VISION OF THE SYNAGOGUE (see Fig. 1)

In the various printed editions of the *Scivias* the text of this vision is exceedingly corrupt. We therefore give here the text in full, opening out the contractions but otherwise transcribing it :

- I. De Synagoga matre incarnationis DOMINI, filii dei. (fol. 35 r.)
- II. Verba salemonis.
- III. Verba Ysaiae prophetae.
- IV. De diuerso colore Synagoge.
- V. de cecitate eius et quod in corde abraham, in pectore

i. De synagoga matre in car  
 nationis domini filii dei.  
 ii. Verba salomonis.  
 iii. Verba vs. ne pphete.  
 iiii. De diuerso colore synagoge  
 v. De occidere eius ⁊ quod in  
 corde abraham. in pectore  
 moyses. in uentre eius reli  
 qui pphete. qd significet.  
 vi. Quod magna ut turris. ha  
 bens circulum in capite. si  
 milem aurore.  
 vii. Verba ezechielis. *Stran*  
 viii. Comparatio de samson. ⁊ de  
 saul ⁊ de dauid ad eandē



FIG. 1. THE VISION OF THE SYNAGOGUE

Moyses. in uentre eius reli-  
qui prophetae. quod significet.

VI. Quod magna ut turris. ha-  
bens circulum in capite, si-  
mitem aurorae.

VII. Uerba ezechielis. *Item*

VIII. Comparatio de samsone, et de  
saul et de dauid ad eandem

Quinta Visio Prime

(fol. 35 v., col. a)

partis Incipit.

POST HAEC

uidi uelut quan-

dam muliebrem

imaginem, a uer-

tice usque ad umbili-

cum pallidam, et ab

umbilico usque ad pedes

nigram, et in pedibus san-

guineam, circa pedes

suos candidissimam et pu-

rissimam nubem habentem.

Oculos autem non habebat.

manus uero suas sub ascellas

suas posuerat. stans iuxta al-

tare quod est ante oculos dei:

sed ipsum non tangebatur. Et in cor-

de ipsius stabat abraham, et in pe-

ctore eius Moyses. Ac in uentre ip-

sus reliqui prophetae. singuli signa su-

a demonstrantes. et pulchritudinem

Ecclesiae ammirantes. Ipsa uero tante

magnitudinis apparuit. uelut ali-

qua turris alicuius ciuitatis est : habens in capite suo quasi circulum similem aurorae. Audiuque iterum uocem de celo dicentem michi. Antiquo populo austeritatem legis deus imposuit cum habrahe circumcisionem indixit. quam postea in gratiam suaui- (fol. 35 v., col. b) tatis conuertit per filium suum ueritatem euangelii credentibus dedit : ubi iugo legis sauciatos. oleo misericordiae delinivit. *De Synagoga matre incarnationis filii dei*

- I. Quapropter uides uelut quandam muliebrem imaginem a uertice usque ad umbilicum pallidam : quae est Synagoga mater incarnationis filii dei existens. et ab initio surgentium filiorum suorum usque ad fortitudinem eorum secreta dei in obumbratione praeuidens. sed ea non pleniter aperiens. illa autem rutilans aurora que aperte loquitur non existens, sed eam in multa ammiratione a longe intuens. et sic in canticis canticorum de ipsa dicens. *Verba Salemonis*
- II. Que est ista quae ascendit per desertum deliciis affluens, et innixa super dilectum suum. Quod dicitur. Quae est hec noua nupta, que in plurimis bonis operibus se eleuat per deserta paganorum, legalia praecepta sapientiae dei deserentium. et idola ado-



rantium, ascendens ad superna desideria deliciis donorum spiritus sancti habundans, ac sic studio anhelans et se ponens supra sponsum suum, scilicet filium dei. Haec enim est quae a filio dei dotata. in praeclaris uirtutibus iuget. (fol. 36r., col.a) et in riuulis scriptorum habundat :  
Sed et eadem Synagoga, de filiis eisdem nouae sponsae per multam ammissionem in seruo meo Ysaia propheta.

Isyas sic dicit. *Uerba Isaie prophetae.*

III. Qui sunt hi ut nubes uolant, et quasi columbae ad fenestras suas. Quod dicitur.  
Qui sunt isti qui in mentibus suis se abstrahentes de terrenis ac carnalibus concupiscentiis. pleno desiderio et plena deuotione ad superna uolant. et columbina simplicitate absque amaritudine fellis. sensus corporis sui muniunt et munimentum firmissime petrae quae unigenitus dei est. multo ardore bonarum uirtutum appetuntur.  
Hii enim sunt. qui propter supernum amorem terrena regna conculcant. et celestia querunt. Hec Synagoga ammirabatur de Ecclesia, quoniam se his uirtutibus ita munita (¶) non cognouit sicut illam praeuidit. quia Ecclesia angelicis praesidiis circumdata est ne eam diabolus dilaniet et deiciat. cum Synagoga adeo deserta in uiciis iaceat.

IV. *de diuerso colore Sinagoge.*

Quapropter uides etiam ipsam ab  
umbilico usque ad pedes nigram  
quod est a fortitudine (fol. 36 r., col. b)

suae dilatationis usque ad consummationem  
suae extensionis in praeuaricatione legis  
et in transgressione testamenti patrum  
suorum sordidam : quia multis modis  
divina praecepta neglexit, et voluptatem  
carnis suae secuta est. Et in pedibus  
sanguinea, circa pedes suos candidissimam  
et purissimam nubem habet. quoniam in  
consummatione sua prophetam prophetarum  
occidit, ubi et ipsa lapsa corrui-  
t. in eadem tamen consummatione  
lucidissima et perspicacissima fide in  
mentibus credentium surgente : quia  
ubi sinagoga consummationem accepit.  
Ecclesia surrexit : cum apostolica  
doctrina post mortem filii dei se per  
totum orbem terrarum dilatauit. *De  
Cecitate eius qui quod in corde eius  
abraham. in pectore moises. in uentre  
eius reliqui prophetae quod significant.*

## V. Sed eadem imago oculos non habet.

manus uero suas sub ascellas suas  
ponit. quia sinagoga in veram lucem  
non aspexit cum unigenitum dei in  
despectu habuit. unde et opera iusticiae  
sub tedio pigritiae suae torporem a se  
non proiciens tegit. sed ea velut non  
sint negligenter abscondit : stans  
iuxta altare quod est

ante oculos dei, sed ipsum non tangit. quoniam legem dei quam divino praecepto. et divina inspectione accepit. exterius quidem (fol. 36 v., nouit. sed eam interius non tetigit. quia col. a) eam potius abhorruit quam diligeret. sacrificia et incensum devotarum orationum deo offerre negligens. Sed in corde ipsius stat abraham. quoniam initium circumcisionis in sinagoga ipse fuit: et in pectore eius moyses. quia in praecordia hominum divinam *legem ille* attulit. ac in uentre ipsius reliqui prophetae. id est in institutione illa quae ipsi diuinitus tradita fuerat. inspectores diuinorum praeceptorum singuli signa sua demonstrantes et pulchritudinem Ecclesiae amirantes. quoniam ipsi miracula prophetiae suae in mirabilibus signis ostenderunt. et speciositatem generositatis nouae sponsae in multa ammiratione attendunt. *Quod magna ut turris. habens circulum in capite.* Ipsa uero tantae *similem aurore.* VI. magnitudinis apparet. uelut aliqua turris alicuius ciuitatis est: quia magnitudinem diuinorum praeceptorum suscipiens. municionem et defensionem nobilis et electae ciuitatis pronunciauit habens in capite suo <sup>quasi</sup> circulum similem aurore. quia etiam in ortu suo miraculum incarnationis unigeniti dei persignauit. et claras uirtutes ac mi-

steria que secuntur praemonstrauit.  
 Nam ipsa uelut in primo mane coro- (fol. 36 v.,  
 nata fuit. cum diuina praecepta acce- col. b)  
 pit! designans adam qui primum  
 uissionem dei percepit. sed postea in trans-  
 gressionem suam in mortem cecidit. Sic  
 et iudei fecerunt. qui diuinam legem  
 primitus susceperunt. sed deinde fili-  
 um dei in incredulitate sua abiece-  
 runt. Sed et sicut homo per mortem uni-  
 geniti dei circa nouissimum tempus de  
 perditione mortis ereptus est. \* ita et Sy-  
 nagoga ante nouissimum tempus de  
 perdicione mortis ereptus est.\* ita et si-  
 nagoga ante nouissimum diem per di-  
 uinam clementiam exercitata. incre-  
 dulitatem deferet. et ad cognitionem  
 dei ueraciter perueniet. Quid est hoc?  
 Nonne aurora ante solem ascendit?  
 Sed aurora recidit. et claritas solis per-  
 manet. Quid est hoc? Uetus testamen-  
 tum recessit. et ueritas euuangelium per-  
 manet. quia quae antiqui in legali-  
 bus obseruationibus carnaliter obser-  
 uabant. Haec nouus populus in nouo te-  
 stamento spiritaliter exercet. quoniam  
 quod illi in carne ostenderunt. hoc  
 isti in spiritu perficiunt. Nam circumcisio  
 non periit. quia in baptismum transla-  
 ta est. quoniam ut illi in uno membro sig-

\*-\* In MS. this passage is lined through.

nati sunt. sic et isti in omnibus membris  
 suis. Unde antiqua praecepta non perie-  
 runt. quia in meliorem statum trans-  
 lata sunt. cum etiam in nouissi- (fol. 37 r., col. a)  
 mo tempore. sinagoga ad Ecclesiam  
 se fideliter transferret. Nam o Sy-  
 nagoga cum in multis iniquitatibus  
 errares. ita quod cum baal et cum ce-  
 teris his similibus te pollueres. con-  
 suetudinem legis turpissimis mori-  
 bus scindens et nuda in peccatis tuis  
 iacens! feci ut ezechiel seruus meus  
 loquitur dicens. *Verba ezechielis*  
 EXPANDI amictum meum super VII.  
 te. et operui ignominiam tuam :  
 et iuravi tibi. et ingressus sum  
 pactum tecum. Quod dicitur. Ego.  
 filius altissimi, in uoluntate patris  
 mei extendi incarnationem meam.  
 o sinagoga super te. id est pro salute tu-  
 a, auferens peccata tua, que in mul-  
 tis obliuionibus operata es. et firmaui  
 tibi remedium saluationis. ita quod  
 itinera federis mei ad salutem tuam  
 manifestaui cum ueram fidem per  
 apostolicam doctrinam tibi aperui qua-  
 tenus ⟨?⟩ praecepta mea obseruares. uelut  
 mulier potestati mariti sui subiace-  
 re debet. Nam asperitatem exte-  
 ris legis a te abstuli, et suauitatem  
 spiritualis doctrinae tibi dedi. ac  
 omnia Mysteria mea in spiritualibus

doctrinis per metipsum tibi  
ostendi. Sed tu me iustum deseruisti.  
et diabolo te iunxisti. *Comparatur* (fol. 37 r., col. b)  
*de Samsonē. et de Saul. et*  
*de David. ad eandem rem.*

Sed tu o homo intellige. scilicet ut samsonem uxor ipsius deseruit, ita quod lumine suo priuatus est : sic et sinagoga filium dei deseruit cum eum obdurata spreuit. et cum doctrinam illius abiecit. Sed postquam deinde capilli eius iam renati sunt ita quod ecclesia dei confortata est. idem filius dei in fortitudine sua Synagogam deiecit. et natos illius exheredauit. cum etiam per paganos deum ignorantes. in zelo dei contriti sunt. Ipsa enim multis erroribus totius confusionis et scismatis se subiecerat. et cum preuaricationibus totius iniquitatis se polluerat. Sed etiam quemadmodum dauid uxorem suam quam sibi primitus desponsauerat. et quae cum alio uiro se polluerat tandem reuocauit. ita etiam et filius dei Synagogam que sibi primum in incarnatione sua conuincta erat. sed gratiam baptismi deserens diabolum secuta fuerat. tandem circa nouissimum tempus recipiet : ubi ipsa errores infidelitatis suae deferens. ad lumen veritatis redibit. Nam diabolus Syna-

gogam in cecitate illius rapuerat (fol. 37 v., col. a)  
et eam infidelitatem in multis erroribus  
tradiderat: nec hoc usque ad filiam perdi-  
cionis facere cessabit. qui dum in ex-  
altatione superbiae suae ceciderit velut  
saul in monte gelboe interfectus ex-  
spirauit. qui dauid de terra sua fuga-  
uerat. sicut etiam filius iniquitatis  
filium meum in electis suis Expellere  
tentabit. tunc idem filius meus an-  
ticristo deiecto. Synagogam ad ueram  
fidem reuocabit. sicut et dauid pri-  
mam uxorem suam post mortem saulis  
recepit: Cum in nouissimo tempore  
homines illum per quem decepti fue-  
rant. uictum uiderint. et ad uiam  
salutis cum multa festinatione re-  
current. Non autem decuit ut ue-  
ritas euangelii umbram legis praeun-  
ciaret. quoniam decet ut carnalia praecurrant  
et spiritalia subsequantur. quia etiam  
seruus dominum suum uenturum praedi-  
cit. et non dominus seruum in seruicio prae-  
currit. Ita et sinagoga in umbra sig-  
nificationis praecucurrit. et Ecclesia in lu-  
mine ueritatis subsecuta est. Unde  
quicumque scientiam in spiritu sancto et pen-  
nas in fide habet. iste admonitio-  
nem meam non transcendat. Sed eam  
in gustu animae suae amplectendo  
percipiat.

## TRANSLATION OF THE VISION OF THE SYNAGOGUE

‘I saw the appearance of a woman, light in colour from the head to the lap and black from the lap downward, but her feet were bloodstained, and a brilliant shining cloud was round about them. She was sightless, and her hands were folded under her armpits. And she stood hard by the altar which is before the eyes of God, yet she touched it not. In her heart stood Abraham, and in her bosom Moses, and in her belly were the other prophets, bearing each his own emblem, and all adoring the beauty of the Church. She appeared tall as a citadel, and round her head a wreath like to the dawn.

And I heard a voice from heaven speaking to me, saying: God placed the burden of His law on His ancient people when He ordained the circumcision unto Abraham, but in after days by the grace of His mercy He changed this when, through His son, He gave the truth of His gospel to those who believed on Him. Thus did He anoint with the oil of His mercy the chafing wounds caused by the yoke of His law.

(1) Concerning the Synagogue as mother of the Son of God in the flesh.

This figure which thou seest as a woman, pale from head to lap, is the Synagogue, the true mother of the incarnate Son of God. And from the first when her sons arose with such strength as was in them, she hath seen the secrets of God, but darkly and not in their fullness. Yet is she not that rosy dawn which was clearly prophesied, but she perceiveth it from afar. With great wonder she speaketh thus of herself in the Song of Songs: [8. 5]

(2) “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness



overflowing with delights and leaning on her beloved." It is this new bride who raiseth herself by the multitude of her good works in the desert of unbelief, where men desiring laws rather than God's wisdom, do but worship idols. But, rising to noble desire, and overflowing with the joys of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and filled with zeal, she leaneth on her spouse, the Son of God. For she is His portion, and she is joined to Him in shining virtues, and she overfloweth with the rich springs of the Word.

(3) And in great wonder concerning the offspring of that union, the Synagogue speaketh thus by the mouth of Isaiah, my servant (Isa. 60. 8): "Who are these that fly as a cloud and as a dove to their windows." Who are those, that is, who abandoning earthly thoughts and carnal desires turn their whole yearning and devotion to heaven, and with the simplicity of doves and with no earthly bitterness they seek the fortress of the true rock, the only begotten Son, and aspire to good deeds with burning ardour. These are they who despise the kingdom of this world because of their love for the heavenly.

This Synagogue marvelleth concerning the Church thus armed with virtues, and findeth her not as she had foreseen. For the church is girt by guardian angels lest the devil injure her or cast her down, while the Synagogue lieth in sin, forsaken of God.

(4) Of the varied colour of the Synagogue.

She is black from lap to feet. This implieth that she is defiled in all her wide borders by her violation of the law and her transgression of the testament of her fathers, for she neglected the divine precepts to follow after the lusts of the flesh.

There is blood about her feet, yet are they surrounded

by a most pure and shining cloud. This is because in her consummation she slew the prophet of prophets, and with that crime she fell. But in that very act did the true faith arise in the souls of those who believed, for when the Synagogue accepted her consummation the Church arose, and after the death of the Son she spread herself by her apostolic doctrine throughout the world.

(5) Concerning the blindness of the figure.

The figure is sightless and hath folded arms, because the Synagogue seeth not the true light but holdeth the Only Begotten in contempt, and because, not putting away her torpor, she covereth her just works under the pall of her sloth and concealeth them as though they were not.

And she standeth by the altar but toucheth it not, for that she accepteth the Law of God in precept and theory and knoweth it from without; yet she attaineth not to its inward meaning, for, neglecting the true sacrifice of prayer, she rejecteth rather than pursueth it.

But Abraham is in her heart, for [through him] circumcision was first in the Synagogue; and Moses is in her bosom, for he brought the divine law to men's hearts; and the other prophets are in her belly, for that [law] descendeth by grace divine through her. These searchers after the divine precepts all display their proper emblems and adore the beauty of the Church, because they themselves, in the miracles of their prophecy, foretold her wonders, and they waited adoring the glory of the new espousal.

(6) She is tall as a tower and hath a circlet like the dawn round her head.

She appeareth tall as a citadel because, containing the might of the divine precepts, she adviseth the provision and defence of the chosen city.

She hath around her head a circlet like the dawn, because in her origin she predestinated the miracle of the Incarnation and foretold those shining virtues and mysteries which followed. For she was, as it were, crowned by that first dawn when she accepted the divine precepts after the manner of Adam who first saw God. But afterwards she died in her sin, for so the Jews have done who did receive the first divine law, but then thrust away the Son in their unbelief, for man was delivered from perdition in the new age by the death of the Only Begotten One.

Thus the Synagogue, disciplined by divine mercy, did indeed before the new day put away unbelief, and did in truth attain to the knowledge of God. What portendeth this? Doth not the dawn appear before the sun? But the dawn fadeth and the light of day remaineth. What doth this portend? The old dispensation passeth, the new Evangel remaineth. For the ancients observed the Law after the flesh, but the new people worketh by the spirit according to the new dispensation. . . . For circumcision was not abrogated but was changed into baptism, for the one acts on a single member alone, but the other on all the members. And similarly the old laws have not perished but have been changed into better ones.

Wherefore in the fulfilment of years the Synagogue shall, believing, hand herself over to the church, for thou, O Synagogue, wanderest in many iniquities and pollutest thyself as though with Baal and his like, by cleaving to the observance of the law with its evil customs and by lying naked in thy sins.

(7) Do thou as commanded by my servant Ezekiel [16. 8]: "I spread my skirt over thee and covered thy shame. Yea, I sware unto thee and entered into a covenant

with thee", as though it were said, I, Son of the Most High, do cover thee, O Synagogue, by the will of my father with my Incarnation, that is for thy health, and I do bear the sins which thou hast worked in darkness.

And I have assured for thee the means of salvation, and have shown forth the path of my covenant when I revealed to thee the true faith by apostolic doctrine, so that thou shouldst observe my precepts, even as a woman should submit herself to the rule of her husband.

For I removed from thee the severity of the outward law, and gave thee the grace of spiritual doctrine, and I revealed to thee through myself all the mysteries of my spiritual doctrine, but thou hast forsaken me, thy lawful spouse, and joined thyself to the devil.

(8) Comparison under the same head of Samson, Saul, and David.

But understand this, O man! Just as when his wife betrayed Samson, his light was put out, so hath the Synagogue betrayed the Son of God, and unrepentantly despised Him and rejected His doctrine. But later, when His hair is grown again, as when the Church grew strong, this same Son of God in His might cast down the Synagogue and disinherited her children, so that the very heathen, ignorant of God, were moved by His anger.

But she lay in the errors of utter confusion and schism and defiled herself with the follies of sin. And so also David espoused a wife whom he at length reclaimed when she had defiled herself with another. Similarly the Son was at first through His Incarnation wedded to the Synagogue, but she, rejecting the grace of baptism, was lured by the devil. But at length, in the new age He will receive her when, abandoning her errors and unbelief, she will

return to the light of truth. For Satan ravished the Synagogue in her blindness, and betrayed her in her infidelity and error, and will not cease to act as a son of perdition.

But in the exaltation of his pride he will perish as Saul did, who drove David from his land, and was pierced through and died on Mount Gilboa. So also the son of iniquity will attempt to expel my Son ; but my Son, having thrown down Antichrist, will call back the Synagogue to the true faith, as David took back his wife after Saul's death.

And so in the new age men will witness the overthrow of him by whom they were deceived and will rush to the paths of salvation. For it was not fitting that the truth of the Evangel should precede the gloom of the Law, but it was more fitting that the carnal should precede and the spiritual follow. For the servant predicteth the coming of the master, but the master goeth not before the servant. Thus the Synagogue came first in the shadow of symbolism, and the church followed in the full light of truth.

Wherefore whoever hath the knowledge of the Holy Spirit and the wings of faith in him, will not transgress my warning but will embrace it with joyful soul.'

#### THE MINIATURE OF THE SYNAGOGUE

The background is gold. The upper part of the figure as far as the waist is a pale purple, the lower part is dark blue or black. The feet are scarlet, and around them is a silver area. Across the forehead runs the circlet, which is gilt with a red tinge to signify the dawn. The eyes are fast closed, and the countenance downcast, and the hands folded impotently across the breast.

On the bosom of the figure is Moses. He is clad in a red cloak over a pale blue tunic. His countenance is raised. On his head he wears the blue conical cap that was the characteristic mark of the Jews in the Rhineland of the twelfth century. His left hand is concealed under his cloak, but in his right he holds the two tables of the Law, coloured dark red and arranged in their traditional form. This is probably one of the earliest manuscript representations of the double tables of the Law.<sup>5</sup>

Below the arms of the figure and placed in the 'epigastric' region can be seen Abraham, holding the circumcisonal knife in his right hand. In front of and somewhat below him is presumably the figure of Aaron, distinguished by his white head-dress, from the front of which are suspended three small rings or jewels. The other prophets, of whom ten are represented, have no head coverings. They all look expectantly for the coming Messiah.

#### THE MARKET-PLACE (Fig. 2)

The blue conical Jewish hat appears twice more in the miniatures of the Wiesbaden MS., in Book II, Vision VII, folio 116 recto, and in Book III, Vision IV, folio 145 verso. The former scene represents a market-place. We will not detain the reader with Hildegard's allegorical interpretation, which is of no specifically Jewish interest, but her description of the scene we give below :

(Fig. 2) 'quasi forum ubi diuitiae hominum atque deliciae seculares et mercatus diuersarum rerum apparuerunt : ubi etiam quidam homines multa celeritate currentes.

<sup>5</sup> The facts in connexion with the representation of the Decalogue in Art have been collected by Dr. Israel Abrahams in *Studies in Jewish Literature presented to Professor Kaufmann Kohler*. See also Cahier and Martin, *loc. cit.*

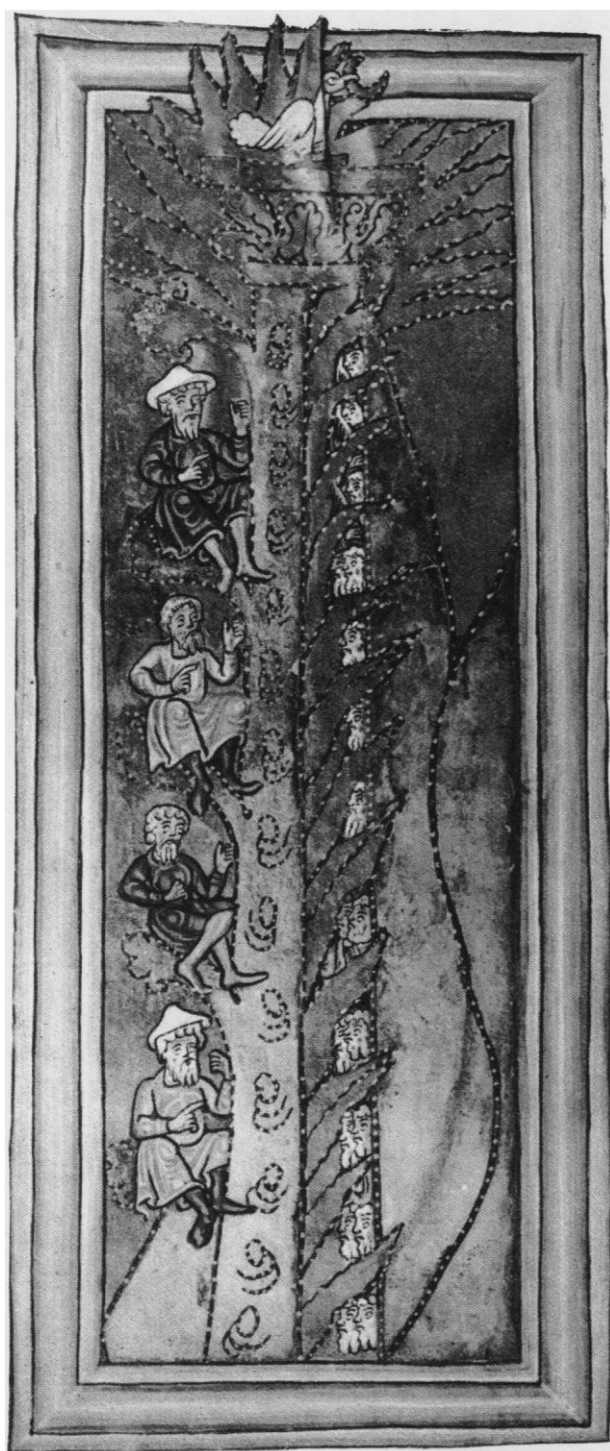


FIG. 3. THE COLUMN OF GOD'S WORD

nullum mercatum faciebant. quidam autem tepide euntes. et venditioni et emptioni ibi insistebant' (fol. 15 r., col. b). At the back of the picture are seen two merchants at their stalls with the characteristic Jewish hats. They are beckoning the two 'tepede euntes' purchasers, while upon their stalls are spread a somewhat meagre selection of 'deliciae seculares', among which gauntlets and girdles can be distinguished. Lower down in the forum can be seen a group of those 'quidam homines multa celeritate currentes', urged to even more rapid movement by a monk behind them.

It will be noted that, except for the hat, the costume of the Jews is similar to that of the other frequenters of the forum. There is no appearance of a special Jewish cast of countenance. Nor does Hildegard anywhere refer to the Jews as engaged in any form of finance, but only in trade.

#### THE COLUMN OF THE WORD OF GOD (Fig. 3)

The next miniature that we here consider is an allegorical representation of the tree or column of God's word (folio 145 verso, Book II, Vision IV, Fig. 3). On one side of the column, poised in the angle of its branches, sit various prophets. At the base is Abraham with the Jewish hat, then Moses, then Joshua, and in the highest ring a fourth figure in the typical hat exemplifying the remaining prophets. On the other side of the trunk peep out the heads of the apostles, martyrs, and virgins. On the summit, shaped like a Corinthian capital, is perched the Dove, surrounded by flames and bearing in its beak the true light symbolized by a gilded moon-shaped object.



The remaining picture that concerns us here (Fig. 4) is in the following folio (folio 146 recto, Fig. 4), where there is a very spirited miniature of a benign female figure, emblematic of the knowledge of God, surrounded by angels. On her right, a group of her followers crowd in upon her, while to her left her rebellious children dance out of the picture (Book II, Vision IV). Among these rebels the Jews are to be included, and the facial character of the foremost of the three is perhaps an attempt on the part of the artist to imply this. In any case the free drawing and movement of these figures is sufficiently remarkable in a twelfth-century MS. to justify the reproduction of the miniature.



FIG. 2. THE MARKET PLACE



FIG. 4. THE REBELLIOUS AND THE FAITHFUL